

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TASK FORCE

Guide to the
Task Force Bylaws

Harris County Judge's Office
August 2020

INTRODUCTION

The Harris County Flood Control Task Force was created by Harris County Commissioners Court in 1972 to advise and recommend “policies and programs to adequately protect homes and businesses from the hazards of flooding and facilitate economic development.” In 2020 Harris County reshaped this entity into the **Harris County Community Flood Resilience Task Force (CFRTF)** to reflect a broader approach to the infrastructure challenges and opportunities in our community.

In conjunction with the Task Force, Harris County has established an **Infrastructure Resilience Team** (IRT), made up of representatives from County departments, to develop and guide implementation of a 2050 Harris County Flood and Infrastructure Resilience Plan (Resilience Plan). These two efforts are designed to work together to promote multidisciplinary resilience across Harris County.

The Community Resilience Task Force Bylaws are the governing document and lay out the purpose, structure, scope, and procedures for the Task Force. The Office of Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo invited the community to share thoughts and ideas on the in-process bylaws in July 2020. The feedback was collected and considered as the team revised the bylaws.

This Guide provides an overview of the final bylaws, which govern the Task Force going forward.

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Need More Information?

Visit cjo.harriscountytx.gov/crtf for more information, to join the email list, or to stay up to date on the Task Force.

Any Questions?

Email CRTF@cjo.hctx.net to connect with a member of the Task Force Team

DEFINITIONS

These bylaws use the following definitions:

- **“Equitable resilience”** — “[a] form of human-environmental resilience that takes into account issues of social vulnerability and differentiated access to power, knowledge and resources. It starts from people’s own perception of their position within their human-environmental system and accounts for their realities and their need for a change of circumstance to avoid imbalances of power into the future.”¹
- **“Infrastructure resilience team” (IRT)** — the Harris County Engineering Department, Harris County Flood Control District, Harris County Community Services Department, Harris County Toll Road Authority, and the Harris County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.
- **“Flood resilience planning efforts”** — flood resilience planning activities by the IRT or any of its member departments, including to develop goals, strategies, or an overall approach for improving Harris County’s flood resilience and reducing its vulnerability to flooding and flood-related disasters. Also refers to plans or initiatives that are developed, overseen, or implemented by the IRT or any of its member departments to strengthen Harris County’s capacity for flood resilience and preparedness, which includes but is not limited to long-term funding strategies, land use planning activities, and buyout programs that are developed and implemented for this purpose.
- **“Flood resilience projects”** — Harris County’s flood resilience projects and activities that are developed, overseen, or implemented by the IRT or any of its member departments in accordance with or to effectuate flood resilience planning efforts. Also refers to future projects being carried out by the IRT or any of its member departments to strengthen Harris County’s flood resilience that are in the Capital Improvements Program. Also refers to policies, standards, and regulations developed or enforced by the IRT or any of its member departments to further flood resilience goals, while maintaining consistency with state and federal law. Projects undertaken and funded by the individual Precinct Commissioners are not subject to review by the CFRTF unless specifically requested by the Precinct Commissioner that is funding the project.

¹ Matin, N., Forrester, J., & Ensor, J. (2018). “What is equitable resilience?” World Development. Retrieved from <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2018.04.020>.

PURPOSE & TASKS

The **PURPOSE** of the Community Flood Resilience Task Force is

“ To serve in an advisory capacity to the IRT and, in turn and as applicable, the Harris County Commissioners Court to promote collaboration among stakeholders and encourage equitable resilience planning efforts and flood resilience projects that:

- Support holistic, innovative, and nature-based solutions to building flood resilience and mitigating flood risks;
- Achieve multiple short- and long-term benefits for as many Harris County communities as possible;
- Take into account the needs and priorities of the community and promote equitable community-level outcomes in the face of flooding; and
- Protect communities, homes, and businesses across Harris County from flood-related hazards. **”**

The **TASKS** of the Community Resilience Task Force are to:

- 1. Provide evaluation and feedback** on the following flood resilience topics:
 - Overall approach and planning
 - Development of specific projects and activities
 - Effective implementation of previously approved projects¹
 - Future funding strategies
- 2. Encourage transparency and provide oversight** for future flood resilience efforts
- 3. Further and support** community engagement by the IRT and County departments around flood resilience efforts.

¹ The CFRTF is not tasked with reevaluating or reprioritizing projects already approved by Commissioners Court, including the 2018 flood bond projects.

COMPOSITION

Members of the Task Force must be residents of Harris County, have a demonstrated interest in serving the community, are able to contribute meaningful time and effort, and, if possible, meet one or more of the following qualifications:

- Represent one or more flood-impacted community
- Demonstrate knowledge of or interest in innovative and environmental sustainable approaches to flood resilience and flood risk mitigation
- Demonstrate knowledge of or interest in the socioeconomic, demographic, and environmental factors that affect the resilience of communities



Out of the 17 members, there must be¹:

- 2 members from flood-prone low-income communities
- 2 members from flood-prone communities of color
- 3 members with scientific and/or technical expertise in flood resilience or flood risk mitigation

¹ Members may satisfy more than one category. For example, the Environmental Sustainability representative may also represent a flood-prone community of color

STRUCTURE

The Task Force will have the following organizational structure. The members should represent the geographic, racial, gender, age, and ethnic diversity of Harris County and will meet at least 6 times per year. Members will serve staggered 2 year terms, after an initial term of 1 or 2 years. Members may serve 3 consecutive terms.

